



U.S. Department of Justice

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EVENT: Indictment

Defendant: Michael A. Clark et al

**15 PEOPLE INDICTED ON MARIJUANA
AND COCAINE CHARGES**

Thirteen individuals from the Detroit area and two from Arizona have been indicted by a federal grand jury in Detroit on charges of Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to Distribute and to Distribute Marijuana and Cocaine, Use of a Communication Facility to Conspire to Possess with Intent to Distribute Controlled Substances, Money Laundering , engaging in a Continuing Criminal Enterprise and Felon in Possession of a Firearm, announced United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy. Mr. Murphy was joined in the announcement by Special Agent in Charge Robert L. Corso, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Special Agent in Charge Daniel D. Roberts, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Chief Ella Bully-Cummings, Detroit Police Department (DPD) and Col. Tadarial J. Sturdivant, Director of the Michigan State Police (MSP).

Named in the indictment are:

Michael Anthony Clark,
Kevin Lenard Youngblood
Charles Riley Gadson
James Jackson
FNU LNU aka "Tio"
Todd Duane Benally
Treyvan Agee

Bessie Blount Howard
Alissa Canty
Stephanie Helen Baxter
Ramando Antone Wellons
Jerry L. Sexton
Lee H. Gilmore
Leon Johnson
Felix Pedro Betanco

According to the indictment, defendant CLARK was the leader of a Detroit based drug trafficking organization which operated in the Detroit area for more than 15 years. The organization is responsible for transporting more than 1,000 kilograms of marijuana from the Western United States to the Eastern District of Michigan, and elsewhere for distribution, as well as over 11 kilograms of cocaine.

As part of their roles in the organization defendants CLARK and YOUNGBLOOD recruited and caused others to assist in the transportation of marijuana and cocaine from the Western United States of America to the Eastern District of Michigan for distribution as well as to assist in the transportation of monies in payment for the controlled substances. In addition the co-defendants would store the cocaine and marijuana in their homes and in stash-houses to prevent detection by law enforcement.

In January 2005, FBI, DEA, DPD, and MSP initiated this investigation in an attempt to successfully disrupt and dismantle this violent gang and drug trafficking organization headed by CLARK by utilizing innovative investigative techniques. As a result of this investigation, two Arizona based marijuana drug traffickers associated with this organization were targeted. Law enforcement determined that a large amount of marijuana was en route to Detroit from Arizona. Large amounts of marijuana was being transported using a tractor-trailer to facilitate the transportation and distribution of this organization's narcotics in Detroit.

This investigation has resulted in the indictment of 15 defendants and the seizure of 1500 pounds of marijuana, over 100 kilograms of cocaine, and approximately \$2 million dollars in cash and other assets. The indictment seeks forfeiture of three homes, twelve automobiles and five businesses.

"This indictment signals my office's continuing commitment to fight large scale marijuana distribution networks like the one named in the indictment from delivering illicit street drugs into the stream of commerce in Detroit. The criminal asset forfeiture counts of the indictment should let all drug dealers know that we are vigilant in our efforts to destroy the drug trafficking trade by taking the profits of drug dealing away from drug dealers and putting the money associated with illegal drugs into the hands of law enforcement," said U.S. Attorney Murphy.

"For 15 years, Michael Clark has hid in the shadows of Detroit furthering his marijuana trade. With his arrest communities face a brighter day free from the terror caused by his drug trafficking organization and activities," said SAC Corso.

"These arrests represent a culmination of the hard work and investigative efforts of the agencies involved. The FBI continues to aggressively investigate the most violent gang and

drug trafficking organizations such as the Clark organization as a top priority,” said SAC Roberts.

U.S. Attorney Murphy noted that this investigation would not have been possible without the combined effort of the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Detroit Police Department, and the Michigan State Police.

A conviction of these offenses carry a statutory sentence of 20 years to life in prison and/or a \$ 4 million. Any sentence will ultimately be imposed under the United States Sentence Guidelines according to the nature of the offense and the criminal background, if any, of the defendant

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. It will be the government’s burden to prove guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.